

Shannon Piccione

Topic: Monitoring Comprehension, using the, “Read, Write, Talk” strategy

Level: Grade 6

Estimated Time: 40 minutes

NYS Learning Standards:

- ELA 1.5: Students will make appropriate and effective use of strategies to construct meaning from print.
- ELA 4.2: Students will take turns speaking and respond to others’ ideas in conversations on familiar topics.
- MST 3.2: Students will use the computer as a tool for generating and drawing ideas.

General Objective: Students will read, (or listen to depending on their educational needs- text to speech) “The Cherry Tree”, jot down (or “talk” to the computer depending on their educational needs - speech to text) their thinking, and have a conversation with a partner about what they wrote.

Essential Questions: 1. What were you thinking as read, and after you finished reading, the passage?

Procedure: The teacher will have previously differentiated the passage, “The Cherry Tree” into three readability levels (5.1, 6.1, and 7.1) to meet the needs of the students. The teacher will also have the computers appropriately set-up: readability levels, text to speech, and speech to text, for the students who require the use of the computers. As the class has used the, “Read, Write, Talk” strategy since the beginning of the school year, most of the students are familiar with where they should go; the students who need the computers are repeatedly assigned the same one because they have, “practiced” using their voices, and the computer recognizes their voices more easily now.

1. The teacher will guide a class discussion reviewing what a legend is. A legend is a story that has been passed down for generations. It is often seen as historically accurate, although there is not always evidence to support that it has happened.
2. The teacher will ask the class if they have ever heard of the George Washington cherry tree legend. The teacher will say, “Do not share the legend with anyone just yet. Today we are going to read about it. Everyone is going to read a short passage, it is only one page. You will also record what you are thinking while, and/or after you read, ‘The Cherry Tree.’ You can record directly on the passage sheet, or on the computer if you are a student using a computer. Then, you will discuss with a partner what you were thinking.” The teacher will randomly pair students.

3. The teacher will ask the students who normally go to the computers to go to them, as well as pass out the appropriate readability passages to each student. The teacher has a list of the readability levels that best meets the needs of the diverse students. The teacher will say, “When you are finished reading and recording your thoughts, stay seated and I will pair you with another student to have a discussion with. This is not a race, so take your time with the reading.”
4. The teacher will ask the class to begin, and will walk around the room to observe that all students are participating, as well as to help the students who need it. The teacher will also look for students who have finished jotting down their thoughts, and pair them with another student who is also finished.
5. When there is either ten minutes left in the class, or everyone has had at least five or six minutes to discuss (whichever comes first), the teacher will ask the class to take one minute to finish up their discussions. Then, there will be a class discussion on the passage, as well as the students’ thoughts of the passage.

For homework, and as a follow-up activity to this lesson, the students will either write a paragraph or illustrate what they would have done if they were George Washington. Would they have told their father the truth, blamed someone else for it, try and hide the cherry tree from their father, plant a new cherry tree, etc. Their paragraph or illustration needs to show why they would have done what they chose. If the students choose to write a paragraph it must follow the basic writing conventions. The students can share their homework with the class the following day.

Assessment: The teacher will assess the students through class discussions, and observations of the students participating in this reading, writing, and talking activity.

Materials:

- Computers with WORD (speech to text, text to speech, readability)
- “The Cherry Tree” by M. L. Weems
- Weems, M.L. Legends and short stories . Retrieved February 13, 2009, from Apples For the Teacher Web site:
<http://www.apples4theteacher.com/holidays/presidents-day/george-washington/short-stories/the-cherry-tree.html>



The Cherry Tree (6.1 Readability)

by M. L. Weems

When George was about six years old, he was made the wealthy master of a hatchet of which, like most little boys, he was extremely fond. He went about chopping everything that came his way.

One day, as he wandered about the garden amusing himself by hacking his mother's pea sticks, he found a beautiful, young English cherry tree, of which his father was most proud. He tried the edge of his hatchet on the trunk of the tree and barked it so that it died.

Some time after this, his father discovered what had happened to his favorite tree. He came into the house in great anger, and demanded to know who the mischievous person was who had cut away the bark. Nobody could tell him anything about it.

Just then George, with his little hatchet, came into the room.

"George," said his father, "do you know who has killed my beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden? I would not have taken five guineas for it!"

This was a hard question to answer, and for a moment George was staggered by it, but quickly recovering himself he cried:

"I cannot tell a lie, father, you know I cannot tell a lie! I did cut it with my little hatchet."

The anger died out of his father's face, and taking the boy tenderly in his arms, he said:

"My son, that you should not be afraid to tell the truth is more to me than a thousand trees! Yes - though they were blossomed with silver and had leaves of the purest gold!"



The Cherry Tree (7.1 Readability)

by M. L. Weems

When George was approximately six years old, he became the affluent master of a hatchet of which, like the majority of small boys, he was exceptionally affectionate. He went about chopping everything that he approached.

One day, as he wandered about the garden entertaining himself by hacking his mother's pea sticks, he found a beautiful, youthful English cherry tree, of which his father dearly loved. He tried the rim of his hatchet on the trunk of the tree and hacked at it until it ceased to live.

Some time after this, his father discovered what had happened to his adored tree. He came into the house in immense fury, and demanded to know who the mischievous person was who had cut away the bark. Nobody could tell him anything about it.

At this point George, with his little hatchet, came into the area.

"George," said his father, "do you know who has killed my beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden? I would not have taken five guineas for it!"

This was a tough question to answer, and for a moment George was flabbergasted by it, but quickly recuperating he cried:

"I cannot tell a lie, father, you know I cannot tell a lie! I did cut it with my little hatchet."

The fury died out of his father's face, and taking the boy tenderly in his arms, he said:

"My son, that you should not be afraid to tell the truth is more to me than a thousand trees! Yes - though they were blossomed with silver and had leaves of the purest gold!"



The Cherry Tree (5.1 Readability)

by M. L. Weems

When George was approximately six years old, he was given an ax that he loved. He chopped everything that came his way.

One day, he walked through his parent's garden and saw a beautiful, young English cherry tree. His father loved that tree very much. George chopped the cherry tree down.

His father was tremendously angry when he found out what happened to his cherry tree. He came into the house in great anger, and demanded to know who cut down his favorite cherry tree.

Just then George, with his little ax, came into the room.

"George," said his father, "do you know who has killed my beautiful little cherry tree yonder in the garden? I would not have taken five guineas for it!"

George was scared to tell his father the truth about the cherry tree because he did not want to get into trouble. However, he knew that people should always tell the truth and said:

"I cannot tell a lie, father, you know I cannot tell a lie! I did cut it with my little hatchet."

His father was no longer mad about his cherry tree. He hugged George and said:

"My son, that you should not be afraid to tell the truth is more to me than a thousand trees! Yes - though they were blossomed with silver and had leaves of the purest gold!"